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Message Text

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17
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SAB-01

TRSE-00 AID-05 ACDA-05 /075 W
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O R 231016Z SEP 75
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8358
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, SY, US
SUBJECT: MARGALIT ARTICLES ON SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS

1. FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF SEPTEMBER 23 ARTICLE BY HAARETZ WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT MARGALIT ENTITLED "THE STATE DEPARTMENT: RABIN HAS NOT EXPRESSED AGREEMENT TO A 3 KM WITHDRAWAL ON THE GOLAN."

2. BEGIN TEXT: ON SEPTEMBER 21, THE SPOKESMAN OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT

TOLD YOUR CORRESPONDENT, ON BEHALF OF DR. KISSINGER, THAT THE DEPARTMENT VIGOROUSLY DENIED REPORTS ACCORDING TO WHICH RABIN HAD EXPRESSED HIS AGREEMENT TO A 3 KILOMETER WITHDRAWAL ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS. HOWEVER, IT IS WORTH MENTIONING THAT EVEN IN THOSE REPORTS IT DID NOT SAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD GIVEN SUCH AN ASSURANCE; IN HAARETZ IT WAS ONLY MENTIONED THAT SUCH A POSSIBILITY HAD BEEN RAISED BY DR. KISSINGER AND THAT IT HAD MERELY BEEN AN IDEA (IN HIS MIND).

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3. AS REPORTED BY SOURCES WHICH HAD BEEN PRESENT AT THAT BRIEFING, IN WHICH KISSINGER VOICED THESE IDEAS, TWO THINGS WERE HEARD ON THE SYRIAN SUBJECT:
--KISSINGER THINKS THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE A

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SETTLEMENT BASED ON A WITHDRAWAL OF 3 KILOMETERS. OBSERVERS SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE INTENTION HAD APPARENTLY BEEN A WITH-DRAWAL IN THE MT. HERMON REGION, UP TO A SPOT BEHIND THE KUNEITRA HILLS, AND PERHAPS THE SHIFTING OF ONE OR TWO ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS.
--KISSINGER IS INITIATING THE RENEWAL OF ISRAELI-SYRIAN CONTACTS ON THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL. THE FIRST ROUND WILL BE HELD WITH SYRIA, NOT WITH ISRAEL. THE DATE SET FOR THAT CONTACT WAS THE END OF OCTOBER. ACCORDING TO KISSINGER, RABIN THOUGHT THAT HE COULD ACHIEVE AGREEMENT BY THE KNESSET AND PUBLIC OPINION IN ISRAEL IF THE AGREEMENT APPEARS REASONABLE TO HIM, "BUT NOT NECESSARILY FOR A WITHDRAWAL OF 3 KILOMETERS."

4. C. THE U.S. IS LIKELY TO HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE IDEAS ATTRIBUTED TO KISSINGER AS BEING HIS FIXED AND FINAL STAND, IN ORDER NOT TO LOSE HIS CAPACITY FOR MANEUVERING BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA. IT HAS ALSO BEEN LEARNED THAT THERE IS EMBARRASSMENT IN WASHINGTON FOLLOWING THE REVELATION ON KISSINGER'S EXPRESSIONS MADE IN A CLOSED BRIEFING SESSION, AT WHICH THE POSSIBILITY OF REACHING A FURTHER INTERIM AGREEMENT ON THE GOLAN WAS DISCUSSED. ISRAEL IS NOW REQUESTING FROM THE U.S. CLARIFICATION CONCERNING THE THOUGHTS ATTRIBUTED TO KISSINGER, ACCORDING TO WHICH HE THINKS THAT IF ISRAEL AGREED TO A 3 KILOMETER WITHDRAWAL ON GOLAN, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH DAMASCUS.
END TEXT

5. IN SEPARATE ARTICLE ON EDITORIAL PAGE, MARGALIT FURTHER ANALYZES "KISSINGER'S SLIP OF THE TONGUE" CONCLUDING THAT CLOSED SESSION BRIEFING IN OHIO REPRESENTS BEGINNING OF U.S. DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY FOR SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO MARGALIT, ISRAELI DENIAL THAT IT HAD MADE ANY COMMITMENT TO US IS ACCURATE, BUT THIS DOES NOT CHANGE REALITY THAT SECRETARY ALREADY HAS CLEAR IDEA OF DIRECTION IN WHICH HE WISHES TO PROCEED. ALL THE PARTIES INVOLVED ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE ISSUES, AND QUESTION NOW IS WHAT ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WILL DO ONCE EXPLORATORY PHASE GETS UNDERWAY. KEY QUESTION WILL BE WHETHER GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER RELOCATING
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ONE OF THE SETTLEMENTS ON GOLAN HEIGHTS. MARGALIT CONCLUDES WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT "THE SYRIAN WHEEL HAS BEGUN TO TURN."
TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TELAV06049
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750329-0359
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197509106/baaaaeza.tel
Line Count: 102
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, SY, US
To: STATE INFO BEIRUT
CAIRO
USUN N Y
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006